

The Joseph Hewlings House
Near Mt. Laurel
Burlington County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-547

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, F.A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The Joseph Hewlings House
Near Mt. Laurel
Burlington County, New Jersey

Owner: Camden Safe Deposit and Trust Co., Camden, N. J.
1938
(Mrs. William E. Carey, Moorestown, N. J.)

Dates of Erection: 1767 and 1818

Architect: Unknown

Builders: Joseph and Samuel Hewlings 1767, and
William Rogers Jr. 1818

Present Condition: Original, fairly well maintained

Number of Stories: Two, with cellar and garret

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone masonry

Exterior walls - stone masonry

Interior walls - brick partition, stone party wall, and frame studding partitions

Chimneys - brick, built into inside of gable end walls

Roof - gable, wood shingled

Historical Data:

By a deed of 27 May 1769, Joseph Hewlings and wife Elizabeth, of Evesham Township, Burlington County, New Jersey, conveyed to their son Samuel Hewlings a 185 acre plantation in the part of that township which has since been set off as the present Mount Laurel.

Samuel Hewlings the grantee, with his wife Elizabeth, being still of Evesham Township, and apparently occupying the property, conveyed the same by deed of 3rd day of 2nd month 1786 to William Rogers of the same township, "farmer" with the "buildings, improvements" etc., for 2000 Pounds "hard money of gold and silver", in which the plantation is described as lying on the north-east side of the road, bounded northwest by lands of Samuel Evans and William Troth and northeast by those of Jacob Wills, Josiah Haines, and the late Isaac Troth.

This William Rogers Sr. owned the place until 25 January 1808 when he transferred it to William Rogers Jr. by deed of that date. The latter, by his will of 2 September 1824 devised "all that farm and tract of land whereon I live, situate in Evesham, containing about 200 acres.....unto my two sons Allen and William Rogers", subject to the lifetime use thereof by his wife, and "to be divided between them in such manner and proportions as to value the share or part having the mansion house and buildings as shall be valued at seven hundred fifty dollars more than the other share".....when my son William arrives at age of twenty-one years, he is to have the share on which are the buildings.

William D. Rogers, apparently the son and devisee abovenamed, conveyed his ninety-five acre share of the farm to William C. Rogers by deed of 25 March 1867. The latter passed it to Chalkley B. Zelle on 15 November 1888, from whom it went to William C. Rogers and wife Meribah W. on the same date. This Rogers conveyed the same to Michael Carey by his deed of 25 March 1890, who in turn transferred it to Patrick Harding by one of 11 September 1926. Harding reconveyed it to Carey on 24 January 1930, from whom it went by sheriff to the Bankers Finance Company on 26 December 1935. The last named conveyed it to the Broadway Merchants Trust Company on 28 March 1938, who passed a deed of 8 April 1938 to the Camden Safe Deposit and Trust Company, describing it as containing ninety-five acres, in the township of Mount Laurel. Permission to survey the house was signed by Mrs. William E. Carey of Moorestown, New Jersey.

Architectural Analysis:

The erection of this substantial and commodious farm house at three different times is evident from its composition and the variety of material used in each operation. The original 21 by 34 foot unit (whose inscribed date of 1767 is said to be visible above the water table at the north end of the east gable end wall when the overlaid stucco is affected by rain) is unusually dignified in proportions as is typical of the house of English Quakers of the period in this County. The stone masonry there employed instead of the customary brick is remarkable for the formality of coursed ashlar used for the south front, the rear being laid up in rubble work. The original pent roof feature traditional from English work of this class remains on the rear but has been removed from the south front (as is clearly evident) in favor of a four-columned verandah at a later date. The two room floor plan with blank end walls is familiar in houses of this period and locality, but the two story brick partition wall is notable in this instance. This first unit of the present house was evidently built by Joseph Hewlings for his son Samuel and it was conveyed to the latter by the deed of 1769 first above cited.

To the west gable end of the house, and in continuation of the south front, a 22 foot extension bearing the inscribed date 1818 was made 30 feet deep, providing a dining room and kitchen on the first floor to relieve the common room of the original unit from those functions. The rubble masonry employed in this second unit, is unfortunate in the south front where it contrasts with the coursed ashlar of the earlier work. Economy therein as in the continuation of the eaves cornice without the modillion brackets was evidently the motive. From the evidence of two adjacent brick arched foundations against the west

wall of the cellar under the kitchen, obviously to support a non-existing fireplace and bake oven, it is apparent that a wing of the original house was demolished to the first floor line to allow for the building of the second unit thereof in 1818 as mentioned. By that time, iron cook stoves were the fashion, hence the chimney free standing in the partition between the kitchen and the dining room. A fireplace in the latter room was also served by this chimney, but has since been removed, the remaining foundation in the cellar below it testifying still to the fact.

The third unit is the modern rear shed of frame construction. Remarkable in this house is the number of closets and built-in cabinets, the case of drawers under the window in the dining room being quite a unique feature. Likewise notable here as in other houses of Quaker families (to whom a portrait or a mirror was forbidden by religious scruple) is the cabinet with its glass paned doors over the fireplace, as detailed on drawing number 25.

Bibliography:

A search of title in Land and Probate records in Burlington County by Oscar F. Benjamin, H.A.B.S. abstractor

Lewis H. Cook
Supervising Historian

Approved:

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District Officer